

BILLY BLACK AND HIS PENNY.



BILLY BLACK was a little English boy who loved the missionary cause. He delighted in nothing more than in attending a good, warm, lively missionary meeting, and was always ready to give what he could. He loved to listen to the addresses, and to join in the singing; and often while playing about the house, or walking in the streets, he hummed over "From Greenland's icy mountains," or some other familiar missionary hymn.

Billy had a missionary box, and put all his spare change in it for the good cause. Sometimes his friends when calling at the house, seeing the box on the parlor table,

would drop in a sixpence. The little boy had put on his box the motto, "God loveth a cheerful giver." He gave cheerfully himself, though he had not much to give; and he desired his friends to do the same. We always feel better when we give cheerfully to the cause of God.

One night there was a great missionary meeting held in Billy's church, and of course he went. The platform was filled with ministers and others, and the church was crowded with people. It was a very interesting meeting. Speakers were there from mission fields in various parts of the world. There was one from India, who told what he had seen in that distant land of darkness. There was another from the Fiji Islands, who spoke of the conversion of cannibals. Another came from the West Indies, and gave an interesting account of the work of God among the negroes in Hayti. Then there were two speakers who had never been in foreign parts, but who stirred up the hearts of the people by their eloquence. Between the different addresses hymns were sung by

the entire congregation, and you may be sure that Billy joined heartily with the rest in singing his favorite hymns.

But there was one thing that troubled Billy very much, and somewhat marred his enjoyment of the meeting. A collection was to be taken, and he had only a single penny in his pocket. He had more in his missionary box, but that was at home; and besides, he was not to open it until Christmas. He felt sorry that he had so little to give, and while he sat in the meeting thinking of it something seemed suddenly to whisper to him, "It's so little it can't do any good. Hadn't you better keep it and buy candy?" Billy thought of it a moment, and he felt the warm blood coming to his cheeks for shame. "No! no!" said he to himself, "if it is small I'll give it." By this time the collector had reached the pew where the little boy was seated, and Billy at once dropped his penny into the basket, and felt better.

The next morning he hastened to look at the paper for an account of his mission

ary meeting. Sure enough, there it was: "Great missionary meeting last night!" Billy hastily read down the column until he came to where it said, "The collection amounted to £95 7s. 1d." He instantly ran into the next room where his mother was sitting, nearly breaking his neck by stumbling over a chair in his haste, and cried out, "O mother! mother! here's my penny in the newspaper! It says, 'The collection was ninety-five pounds seven shillings and *one penny*.' And that's the penny I gave, for if I had not given it the collection would have been only ninety-five pounds and seven shillings."

Billy learned from that time to value even a penny for a good cause. And I have no doubt he felt far happier when he read in the paper the account of that missionary meeting, than he would have felt had he spent his penny for candy or a toy. It made him happy to help in making others happy.
